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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/698,087	10/31/2003	Robert S. Howland	703716.4001	1016
34313	7590	02/22/2006	EXAMINER	
ORRICK, HERRINGTON & SUTCLIFFE, LLP			SWIGER III, JAMES L	
IP PROSECUTION DEPARTMENT			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
4 PARK PLAZA			3733	
SUITE 1600			DATE MAILED: 02/22/2006	
IRVINE, CA 92614-2558				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/698,087	HOWLAND, ROBERT S.
	Examiner James L. Swiger	Art Unit 3733

– The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 31 October 2003.
- 2a) This action is FINAL.                            2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-11 is/are pending in the application.
  - 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) 9-11 is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1,3-5,7 and 8 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 31 October 2003 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
  - a) All    b) Some \* c) None of:
    1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
    2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
    3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 1/9/2005
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

## DETAILED ACTION

### ***Double Patenting***

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claim 1 and 2 are rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claim 5 of U.S. Patent No. 6,770,075 in view of Howland. The difference between the application claims and the patent claims lies in the fact that the patent claims include more elements and more specific. Thus the invention of the patent claims are in effect a "species" of the "generic" invention of the application claims. It has been held that the generic invention is "anticipated" by the "species". See *In re Goodman*, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993). Since the application claims are anticipated by the patent claims, they are not patentably distinct from the patent claims.

In this case, the claimed is a fixation system having a first and second anchor screws that is threaded and has a first clamp and cylindrical opening, and an elongate member receivable between the first and second screw assemblies. With regards to the cylindrical opening, though not specifically stated in the patent application, it is inherent that the opening be circular because the circular opening is part of the clamp assembly, which is attached to the swing bolt, which is attached to a screw, which is circular.

The patent includes a spacer in its claim 5, so it thus it includes more elements, is more specific, and anticipates the instant claim 1 and 2 of the pending application.

#### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1, 3-5 and 7-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Howland (U.S. Patent No. 5,649,926). Howland discloses a device having a first and second anchor assembly (Figs. 1 and 4), each having a threaded portion (52), each having a cylindrical swing bolt (50), each having a clamp assembly (Fig. 1 and item 12) with a cylindrical opening for a rod (82) that is also a passage. Howland also discloses an elongate member that is partially curved (16), and that is also capable of use with the clamp assemblies (see Fig. 1). Howland further discloses clamp assemblies that have an upper and lower portion (see item 10 in Fig. 1), and a screw that has a spherical shoulder (20) that is capable of allowing the clamp portions to mate, pivot, and rotate with respect to each other in their use attaching vertebrae (Col. 1, lines 55-65). Howland further discloses a swing bolt that has a threaded region (22) opposite the respective

first and second screws (in this case the portion screwed into the vertebrae) that allows these regions to be attached to the clamping assemblies in use.

***Allowable Subject Matter***

Claims 2 and 6 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 9-11 are allowed over the prior art.

***Conclusion***

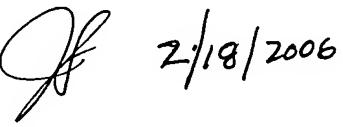
The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. See PTO-892.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to James L. Swiger whose telephone number is 571-272-5557. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday, 8:30am to 5pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Eduardo Robert can be reached on 571-272-4719. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

JLS

 2/18/2006  
EDUARDO C. ROBERT  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER